

Philosophical Fatalism

Human Existence Reasoned Out from a Groundwork of Facts

Address Before the Los Angeles Liberal Club by Channing Severance.

It is my purpose tonight to deal with human existence from the standpoint of fatalism, and this means to take nothing but facts to reason from, and to follow with thought just where they lead.

We can, if we wish, live in a fool's paradise mentally, by cultivating illusions and delusions; but the man who wants the truth let him take it where it will, shuns that condition of mind and goes after the reality of existence.

There are two commonly accepted views of life: One is that we are the product of a God who designed and peopled this world, that he might be worshipped and glorified by us, and that our lives are under his control and protection at all times. The other is that we are the product of natural forces, working without design or purpose, and we have to play the parts that are forced upon us from necessity, and then to disappear as mysteriously as we came. This is the view which I have accepted after years of reflection and meditation, and which will be considered in these remarks under the head of fatalism, which is not a new belief, but one which has found acceptance by many thinkers in the past; and the path of the whole business is found in the words of "Zeno": "There is no God but Nature—no destiny but Fate."

Now what is fate, and what is the philosophy of fatalism? Fate is nothing more nor less than inevitable necessity, and the philosophy of fatalism is: that everything that exists, occurs and transpires, does so because it has to. Fatalism denies that anything occurs by chance, and always finds an adequate cause for every effect. It sees no God connected with Nature's work, and finds no reason to suppose there is any; and beholds in Nature nothing but matter and force working under blind but immutable laws, without plan or purpose, and Nature has never done anything but build up and tear down, create and destroy; and never will.

There is not the slightest reason to suppose that Nature is self-conscious, and no matter how it parts the question of whether Nature represents the apex of created things, Nature has no more regard for him than she has for a mouse, and if he gets in the way of natural forces, as was recently the case in Italy, she will exterminate him just as quickly and with the same indifference.

To suppose that man can be the architect of his own destiny under the conditions that produce him and under which he is compelled to live, is to suppose an impossibility, and rational thinking will compel the acceptance of Carlyle's affirmation: "Whatever we perpetrate, we do but sow; we are sown by fate." Every individual is precisely what he is, from necessity, and no two of us are alike or ever have been in the billions that have existed; and we can no more think alike on all subjects than we can look alike, as Ben Franklin proclaimed.

Now what kind of a character is this mortal man we are dealing with? Says M. L. Sherman, in "The Gospel of Nature": "We find man to be a perfect bundle of incongruities, loving and hating, praying and cursing alternately, fighting with the ferocity of a tiger, and again extending the kindest sympathies toward the object of his wrath."

The history of the world is a record of the doings of this accurately described individual in countless numbers, and this "bundle of incongruities" will, individ-

ually and collectively, continue to play the part he has to play, in the future as he has in the past. But man comes naturally by these incongruities, for the creature cannot rise superior to the creator, so while we are considering incongruities, let us reflect just a moment on a recent fact that sustains Sherman's claim. Two prize fighters met not long ago in the ring, and fought like tigers, and when the victor had pounded his opponent until bloody and helpless, he went over to his corner and kissed him! Could anything be more absurd or incongruous? And yet it all occurred in accord with their natures.

Now let us see how mortal man enters this world of conscious action. We find him at the very start a product of fate, for, as a living, sentient being, he is ushered into existence without wish or desire, and is forced to accept just such a body and brain as pre-existing conditions gave him. No human being has any choice in his parents, his birth-place, his sex, his size, his temperament, or any of his characteristics; all come into existence just as fate or necessity has decreed they should.

What then? Man finds himself in a natural world under the control of natural laws, and is moved to act by impulses which his body and brain determine in connection with his surroundings. He is forced from first to last an involuntary creature, and has no sense that he breathes, his heart beats, digestion takes place, and sleep overpowers him. Not one moment during his waking hours is his mind free from enforced action; and if he would still or stop it, he can do so only by passing into natural or artificial sleep.

While awake, he can no more stop thinking by an effort of will in that way, and here we see that this creature of fate is nothing more nor less than automaton run by natural forces; and right here is as good a time as any to introduce a remark once made by P. B. Randolph: "When Nature compelled man to think, she created his heaven and his hell," and it comes pretty near being the truth, for thinking is the principal thing in life; and as a man thinks, so is the world to him.

But do not forget this fact: Thinking, primarily, is a result, an effect, and not a cause. Now, the forces of Nature pump man's breath and blood independent of his will; digest his food whether asleep or awake, and compel him to think, or to lose about one-third of his time in a state of unconsciousness known as sleep, what else is he, or can he be, but Nature's puppet?

Now let us look at the nature of thought. Says O. W. Holmes: "The more we examine thought, the more we shall see that automatic, unconscious action of the mind enters largely into all its processes," and he further declared what every thinking man knows who reflects upon the subject, that "the moral universe includes nothing but the exercise of choice, all else being machinery." Now, what is choice but the result—the effect of force and conditions that play upon us? All choice is decided by an irresistible force that impels, or an attraction that draws, and strictly speaking, we are as powerless to choose as we are to escape the effect of heat or cold upon our bodies. Our choice is compulsory in every case because the strongest impulse insures it.

We talk about will-power,—but what is it? Will power is nothing but the strength of desires, and all desires are involuntary. The will is not an independent force, but is always subject to the influence of conditions, and is controlled by them with absolute certainty. Both choice and will are

under the control of natural laws as inexorable in their demands on mind, as the laws of gravitation on matter. There is nothing in the universe but mechanical action, and the world as we see it, with its tumults and strifes, its endless and eternal conflict of opinions, is the result of nothing else. Unconscious force works on forever under laws and principles inherent in matter, but for what attainment or to what end, we do not know and never will know. Mortal man does not possess a faculty that is independent of conditions in its actions; so instead of sustaining unconstrained relations to the natural and social states in which he finds himself, he simply does and acts as he must, for every act in its final analysis is unavoidable.

At physical birth, man appears with a body and a brain which, in connection with his surroundings, determines his career on earth and the individual is stamped upon that body and brain is ineffaceable; so an idiot or a natural born fool can never be anything else as long as life lasts. Holmes tells us that persons of buoyant dispositions are born with their happiness ready made, and they cannot help being cheerful any more than their saturnine fellow-mortals can help seeing everything through the cloud he carries with him.

Fate peoples the world with no end of varieties, and then it must run according to the material in it; and as the average human being is still a low grade product we are not going to be astonished in the near future by remarkable changes in society. Good and evil are in constant conflict, and both have periods in which they predominate, as all history and experience attest, and as mortal man is forever being acted upon by the forces and influences that encompass him, his conduct will ever be as uncertain as the position of a weather vane. This is because his desires are not natural causes, as much beyond his control as the return of hunger or the tendency to sleep; and those desires which he cannot escape or prevent are the motives that lead him to act and shape his conduct. Opinions are in conflict on every hand, and hatred, enmity, jealousy and revenge are as natural to the nature of man as love, friendship, approval and good will.

Selfishness and greed exist as naturally as generosity and benevolence, for no trait of character exists without its antithesis, and the manifestations of these varied and conflicting characteristics are entirely dependent on conditions and circumstances. If conditions are such as to produce levity, man will laugh; if such as to produce grief, he will be sad; if such as to produce anger, he will be angry, and so with love, hatred, friendship, enmity, etc. His mind is continually affected by external and internal forces; is effected by what he sees, feels and hears; is swayed by what he eats and drinks; and to quote a French thinker, "he is no more the master of his impressions than of his coughing and sneezing." His mind invariably manifests according to states and conditions of matter, and nowhere on the pages of history can we find the record of a man noted for intellectual greatness who was born and lived in the Arctic regions, or on the equator, for man's body and brain are stupefied with excessive cold, and enervated with extreme heat. Nature will never produce a Shakespeare near the Torrid Zone, nor a Humboldt in the neighborhood of the North Pole, for fate makes it impossible. The kind of human beings produced in gold or torrid localities can never rise superior to the conditions that produced them, while they remain in them; and though superior races are generated and developed in the Temperate Zones they, too, have their limitations. The conditions being better is the only reason for higher-grade abilities and capabilities; so let us retain this fact in mind, that wherever you find mortal man on the surface of this old earth, you find him just what his environments have made him, and as he is forced into the world without will or wish, and is forced out in the same manner, it is evident

that free will plays no part in birth or in death.

Now what is it between the first and that act of conscious existence? Does there exist between these two points in his career such a thing as absolute freedom? No! For if there did, every man could write his autobiography in advance and regulate the affairs of his life according to wish and desire. As it is, he never knows what conditions will lead him to do, or what they will permit him to do, from one day to another. His daily conduct is regulated by the influence of daily conditions; and he walks into the unknown and unseen future without the ability to see one step in advance. As he never knows what conditions will lead or impel him to do from one day to another, we see the truth of the historian's remark, made by John W. Draper, "Events control men, but men do not control events. And this fact can be demonstrated by the local history of an individual most of us are familiar with. About 5 years ago Col. Griffith was a man of wealth and leisure, with no particular object in life except to make money and pursue pleasures. His disposition was born in a complete change in his mode of living, for he is now devoting his time and his wealth, of which he has much, to the work known as prison reform. He has gone into it heart and soul, and proposes to keep at it until desired results are gained. But for the event that put him into San Quentin, the chances are, a thousand to one, that he never would have taken up the work he is now doing."

Thomas Carlyle read and quoted the words of Jeremiah in the Jew Bible: "It is not in man that we seek to direct his footsteps," and gave them his endorsement. "Thinkers must, for no fact in life is more now denying, and the church has told man for ages that he is a free moral agent with power to be good or bad from choice, and to go through life as he saw fit; to go but a greater error nor be found without a motive or act, or without an impulse; and what ever creates the motive or the impulse decides his conduct, for the strongest one always leads to action. If man has no desire to be honest and charitable, he will never be, as was the case with Jay Gould. He was animated by desires that entered in avarice and greed, and he lived for Jay Gould alone, never doing with his hands a charitable deed to benefit his fellow men; and the same can be said of that other human hog, Russell Sage, who lived in fear and died in fear because of his unjustly acquired wealth, and the possibility of losing it, and at his request his body was encased in a steel jacket and bedded in cement, so it could not be stolen to extort the dear dollars from his estate, as was done in the case of New York's merchant prince, A. T. Stewart, some years ago. Peter Cooper, George Peabody, and others were animated with desires to benefit and increase the happiness of others, and they disposed of their great fortunes in doing good and benefiting society. These men were all creatures of fate, and they HAD to live and do as they did, because as automatons in the hands of Nature, they could not do otherwise. The miser who hoards and worships his money does so in obedience to his natural inclinations and desires; and the spendthrift who never saves a dollar and cannot be the slave of his passions, has had just the same power or life principle which created Wendell Phillips the great orator and reformer, also produced the brutal prize fighter, John L. Sullivan, and countless others. The difference in their natures and characteristics. Phillips pursued the course in life which fate decreed, and was animated with high and praise-worthy motives. Sullivan pursued a life line which fate marked out for him, and just as naturally as Phillips kept to his

Creeds Blamed as Barriers. The jealous assumptions of creeds and dogmas, with their insistence on incidentals, conventions and artificialities, are blamed by Doctor Sale as the barriers which prevent the realization of the ideal religion—that preached in the apostolic writings—the worship of God in the service of man.

In serious mien, Doctor Sale smiled solemnly at the traditional idea that God revealed his laws in the beginning exclusively to the Jew. It was a very natural idea for the Jew to entertain the thought. Choosing his words slowly and reflectively, he said: "Not to Israel, not to man of any creed, sect or nationality, but to man, has God revealed himself. Not in the scroll, not in the Bible, is his infallible word, but in the intelligent consciousness of every individual."

When he had completed there was a moment of thoughtful silence on the part of the audience, when Doctor Albert H. Jordan arose and said:

"That was great."

"We'd like to make you a Congregationalist," Doctor Sale, a minister observed.

"I belong to the church universal, and I wish that every church would let me belong to it," was the answer.

This started an engagement of metaphysical shot from which Dr. Sale emerged with an observation upon the gentlemen who tried to settle the question whether it was the jackass who drew the oats or the oats who drew the jackass.

"The problem is still a matter of opinion, as are many of the inconsistencies of ecclesiastical argument," he said.

Profound Philosophy.

"There is," he said, "pro-

Shoots Bible Tales

Hebrew Minister Astonishes Christians by Predicting Univesal Religion

Jolts Orthodoxy's Creeds and Dogmas, Saying Scriptures Reflect Intelligence of Times in Which They Were Written.

(From St. Louis Republic.)

Orthodoxy as it is known today, with its doctrines, creeds and dogmas of the Trinity, the communion, of heaven and of hell, was given a severe jolt yesterday by Rabbi Samuel Sale of the Shaare Emeth Hebrew Congregation, in an address before a body of Christian ministers at the Congregational Ministers' meeting at the First Congregational Church.

Rabbi Sale's remarks brought a breathing silence among his hearers, and his expressions regarding the "universal religion" created a sensation.

In the address of Rabbi Sale the Satanic Majesty, starting through the ages as a figure of ignominy and evil, is given a new role, in which he is only a negative force and becomes a servant of God, not a rival in the activities of man. Heaven is declared to be not a place for future preferment, but a condition to be realized here, now and forever. Hell is abolished, as being no justifiable disposition for those not qualified for eternal bliss. Adam and Eve are relieved from responsibility in the matter of original sin. The Bible, said to be as great a composite as Homer's Iliad or the Odyssey, is shown as fallible as these. It is not a book of plenary inspiration, Dr. Sale asserted, for the only reliable scroll of the law or the word of God is the intelligent conscientiousness of the individual man.

Rabbi Sale denies the Jews the privilege of being the chosen people, except in their own estimation. Christianity, as it is known today, with its foundation doctrines of the Trinity, communion and metaphysical difficulties, Dr. Sale classified as an aftergrowth, and entirely foreign to the exalted simplicity of the lowly Nazarene.

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found philosophy of life, a marvelous clairvoyance into the eternal verities of life on the part of the old prophets, who made fun and belittled the religious notions of their respective eras, and struck out as immaterial and inconsequential the forms and institutionalisms of creeds. Christ, according to the acceptance of the Jewish religion, took his place among these, he being, however, a transcendent unflinching of civilization.

The birth of dogma, the speaker affirmed was an after-growth, after the real and whole-hearted faith had begun to fail. The Christ he averred, same as a reformer, against just such ecclesiasticism and institutionalism, as is being used in the worship today, as he preached against the convention and only insisted on moral principles, that being the reason he suffered opposition.

In vindication of the Devil, Doctor Sale was positive. Evil, he explained, is a negative quality and simply serves as an infraction of the good. Evil and its effects cannot last forever, even in the worst cases to the third and the fourth generation, so it defeats itself and contributes to the ultimate triumphs of good.

"The Devil is a servant of God and cannot be a rival, since God is omnipotent. The devil reports for service along with Job and the rest."

Hell Cannot Exist.

As only good can last forever there couldn't be a hell, he said.

"The only hell recognized in my religion is the fact of not being able to participate in the good. Since good is immortal, immortality may be obtained by partiality may be obtained by partiality in goodness here, in this life. There should not be a stress laid on preferment of a future existence. We should not specialize on a life hereafter, because that much necessary energy is taken away from the accomplishment of our work here. Here is the place to be good."

"As to Adam and Eve," said Doctor Sale, "Scarcely anyone would be ready to believe that the story was the experience of any individual man or woman, but rather the experience of every man and every woman. Adam, translated from the Hebrew, means man and Eve means living. The Garden of Eden is the possible condition in which any man or woman may be placed. Adam and Eve fell in the story, but they fell to manhood and womanhood. It was upward, not downward. God did not put them in this earthly paradise simply that they might fold their hands in idleness. He put them here to till the soil and fulfill his original purpose—the divine obligation to work, to become creative as a part of the great creative force which called them into being."

"Their work was no punishment, but an obligation, the original purpose of their creation. Adam and Eve, like the rest of us, I suppose, would have preferred to gaze along the line of least resistance and pluck the fruit which they had not earned. But they had to work. That was what they were created for."

Showing the fallibility of the Bible as literal history, Doctor Sale said that its various parts reflected the intelligence and culture of the respective ages in which they were written and are not, therefore, infallible as a vehicle for the word of God.

"The word of God is not in the scroll of the law, nor the Bible, nor written on any parchment. These are but results of man's inspiration. And this inspiration is not exclusive. It is written on the mind and soul of man universal."

(Continued on Page 4.)

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BIBLE CLASS QUIZ.

The Philosophical Bible Class
Book, "Bible Myths and Their
Parallels in Other Religions," by
Doane. The Class Reader first
reads the lesson for the day; then
the Quiz Master begins the Memory
Training of the class. The
Reader silently follows the quiz in
the text. The Quiz Master, after
receiving a satisfactory an-
swer in substance, reads the an-
swer in the Quiz. If a question
has been put to three members of
the class without a satisfactory
reply, the reader without request,
proceeds to read that portion of
the text covered by the question.
The question is then again put to
the class, etc.

Lesson for March 20, 1910 "Pagan-
ism and Christianity." Chap-
xxvii, from page 390 to page 394.
Q. 1.—Describe the joys of
Valhalla (the Hall of the Chosen).

A.—All men who have fallen
in fight since the beginning of the
world are going to Odin (the Su-
preme God) in Valhalla. A
mighty band of men are there,
and every day, as soon as they
have dressed themselves they ride
out into the Court (or field), and
there fight until they cut each
other into pieces. This is their
pastime, but when the mealtime
approaches, they remount their
steeds and return to drink in Val-
halla.

Q. 2.—Is there any women in
Valhalla?

A.—Yes, they are there to fill
the cups of the fighters.

Q. 3.—How does the Moham-
medan paradise differ from this?
A.—Women there are for
man's pleasure. The day is al-
ways serene, the air forever pure,
and a soft celestial light clothes
all things in transfigured beauty,
etc.

Q. 4.—Describe the American
Indian's paradise.

A.—He expects successful chase
after wild animals, verdant plains
and no winter.

Q. 5.—What was the red In-

dian's contemptuous reply to the
missionary who told him that in
the promised land, they would
neither eat, drink, hunt, nor mar-
ry a wife?

A.—That instead of wishing to
go there, he should deem his res-
idence in such a place as the great-
est possible calamity.

Q. 6.—How was heaven made?
A.—By cunning priests, who
made man a coward and slave.

Q. 7.—How was hell made?

A.—It was built by priests, dur-
ing the age when dungeons of
torture were a recognized part of
every finite tyrant, with infinite
recourses of vengeance.

Q. 8.—How did the devil get
a start in the world?

A.—Primitive man needed him
to relieve his God of the respon-
sibility for the existence of evil.

Q. 9.—From where did we get
our "Bug-a-hoo"?

A.—From the rock of Babelism
which was named Babelstone, the
place of the Baga, "holy of holies."
The English Bug-a-hoo, or
Bugaboo, is the "holy of holies"
God of the Persians and Russians
of today.

Q. 10.—Tell us about the an-
cient Scandinavian's spring cele-
bration.

A.—This was in honor of Odin,
to welcome the pleasant season,
and to obtain of their God happy
seasons in their projected expedi-
tions.

Q. 11.—Tell us about their an-
tunian equinox festival.

A.—They killed their fat cattle
and laid in provisions for the win-
ter, thanked Odin, the supreme
God, for what he had given them.

Q. 12.—Where, and for what
purpose was the Feast of Lamm
celebrated?

A.—In Egypt, it was in honor
of the goddess Isis.

Q. 13.—The Hindoo's "Feast of
Lamps" was in honor of whom?

A.—The goddesses Lakshmi and
Bhananti.

Q. 14.—How do the Roman
Catholics observe "The Feast of
Lamps," and what do they call
the festival?

A.—By burning candles, on
Candelmas day, or the purification
of the Virgin Mary.

Q. 15.—The ancient celebrated pa-
gan festival held by modern
Christians is what?

A.—Sunday, or the "Lord's
day."

Q. 16.—Why did all the principal
priests of antiquity keep the
seventh day of the week as a
"holy day"?

A.—This was owing to the fact
that they consecrated the days
of the week to the Sun, the Moon,
and the five planets, Mercury,
Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn.

Q. 17.—To whom did Moses
consecrate the number seven?

A.—To the planet Saturn.

Q. 18.—At first the Hebrews cel-
ebrate the Sabbath on what
ground?

A.—In memory of their miracu-
lous deliverance from Egypt and
bondage. (v. 15.)

Q. 19.—Later they celebrated
the Sabbath on what ground?

A.—When the story of crea-
tion was borrowed from the Baby-
lonians, the God rest took the
place (Ex. xxxii).

Q. 20.—The Assyrians kept this
day holy. Mr. Gedschitt tells us
that the story of the creation
was borrowed from the Baby-
lonians, the God rest took the
place (Ex. xxxii).

A.—That in 1869 he discovered
a curious religious calendar,
in which every month is divided
into four weeks, and the seventh
day, marked out as a day of rest.

BRYAN ON IMMORTALITY.

Extracts from Bryan's rhapsody
on Immortality set to music
on Edison's graphophone. Like
music another effusion of oratory
is simply an appeal to men's de-
sires or previous education in such
a way as to make them believe
they are listening to real logic.
Had he made an appeal to their
desires in picturing the horrors of
a burning hell, and its softening
effects on a heart-broken universe
the same (so-called) logic would
call forth conclusions exactly the
reverse.

If some wonderful thing may
occur in nature, so reasons Bryan:
For instance, a grain of
wheat reproduces itself indefinitely,
to the great benefit of man; the
immortality of man would be
wonderful and to the liking of
God, therefore it is a reality ac-
cording to Bryan's logic. But
among the wonderful things in
nature only a part are of direct
benefit to man. Again we may pic-
ture during mental intoxication or
apparently during mental health
innumerable wonderful things to
our liking, and in our distress we
cry aloud for their assistance, and
all mere human and so-called
divine sympathy, love justice and
wisdom in the eloquence of tears

and cadence of sadness may back
our petition, but all we get of our
answer is an echo of our cry.

Even Analogy hides his face in
shame when called upon by Bryan
to assist him in the above pretend-
ed logic, but is disgraced by Bryan
forcing him, the witless, to stand
under a false image and masked
features, pointing out by index
finger the similarity between the
generations of the grain of wheat
and the hypothetical image of man.
But Analogy, in cold at-
titude and honest demeanor says:

"The succession of the genera-
tions of the grain of wheat is an-
alogous to the succession of the
generations of man, while the
mortality (not immortality) of the
individual grain of wheat is an-
alogous to the mortality (not im-
mortality) of the individual man."

The answer to his illustration
of the acorn in the ground coming
forth into a mighty oak, and the
withered rose arising in the
spring after the winter's blasts
should be answered precisely the
same way. The moment either
the acorn or the rose is actually
dead it and the dead man are pre-
cisely in the same condition; Gone
for ever.

So Bryan's logic, when analyzed,
so far as it goes, proves the
exact reverse of what he employ-
ed it to prove. But people love
the charms of fiction, love to be
deceived and are not kind to the
one who furnishes them truth.
Religion furnishes Bryan an op-
portunity to apply his naïf and
brush, and he is landed to the
skies for giving nature hues she
does not own.

PREACHERS AND PRAYERS.

Preachers in their prayers di-
rect God how to manage Chris-
tianity and the world. The Bible
tells us a sparrow cannot fall to
the ground without the Father's
consent.

In the great cyclone at Mal-
colm, Iowa, a few years ago, a
Methodist Church and a Republi-
can printing office were demolish-
ed, and not a saloon or brandy
store was injured. The
preacher's God a poor marksman,
or did he hit his mark.

All preachers prayed for the
restoration of President Garfield
without success. If the preachers
of their Bible, the word of God,
must have had a spite at Gar-
field. Let them explain.

PERRY EAGLE.

THE WORD CHRISTIAN AND ITS MEANING.

The word Christian has a very
narrow meaning. It is not a moral,
a religious, or a theological
term, strictly speaking. It is a
word, not meaning what it is
called. It is a word unrelat-
ed to Education, to Knowledge
or to Science. It does not belong
to any of the progressive move-
ments of the age. It characterizes
none of the great efforts of mod-
ern times. It belongs to the dead
past, and is strictly speaking a
dead word. The word has surviv-
ed the same as other meaningless
words, such as myth, miracle and
others that have survived. Be-
cause it was the stage of intel-
lectual development in which stories
thrive has not been outgrown.
There was a time when a person
might have honestly professed
himself a Christian. But they
cannot honestly do so today, for
in case they do they confess their
ignorance of the true significance
of the term. There cannot be a
Christian unless there was or is a
Christ. It is evident that no Christ
exists in this world, nor in any
other at the present time that we
know of. No nation wants or is
ever looking for a Christ. Two
thousand years ago the Israelites
looked for the advent of a man
whom they could, or should be
appointed King of the Jews, and
who should re-establish the king-
dom of their God on earth. Their
prophets had foretold the coming
of this Messiah and we read that
several persons came to the rescue
and proclaimed themselves the
looked for King, who should lead
the people to victory. In the Bi-
ble we find the story of a man
named Jesus, who was also called
the Christ. But he was never
appointed King of the Jews, nor
of any other kingdom. He was
not of royal blood. He never
led an army. He never fulfill-
ed any Messianic expecta-
tion. The first to call Jesus the
Christ, was Simon Peter. He was
also the first to deny Jesus. Ac-
cording to the narrative it seems
that Jesus becomes anxious to
hear the opinion of his disciples,
and asks, "Whom do men say that
I, the Son of Man, am?" Some

say one thing and some another,
until he comes to Peter, and he
answers, "Thou art the Christ, the
Son of the living God." Jesus
blesses him and tells him that none
other than his father could have
revealed that to him, and, upon
this rock will I build my church.
Presently Peter says something
that displeased Jesus and he turns
upon Peter and gives him a sound
cursing, calling him a Devil or
Satan, and tells him to get behind
him (See Matt. xvi. 23).

So Peter gets a blessing and a curs-
ing all in the same breath as we
may say. But this is the meaning
of Bible Christianity to a letter.
On another occasion Jesus comes
to the front and asks the Phar-
isees, "What think ye of Christ,
Whose Son is He?" The Phar-
isees were unable to tell. Neither
has any other living man from
that day to this been able to an-
swer the question. The nearest
any man has ever come yet is to
say that he was a myth. Another
man named Nathaniel came for-
ward and says: "Rabbi, thou art
the Son of God; thou art the King
of Israel." Now both Peter and
Nathaniel make statements that are
not true for Jesus never showed
any signs of being the Christ
nor being possessed of any divine
qualities whatever. He never was
King of Israel or of any other na-
tion. He never held any office
either church or state higher than
traveling from place to place,
working miracles and cursing fig
trees. Noble work for a man call-
ing himself the Messiah to be en-
tirely dependent upon the will of
the Roman emperor and placed the
crown of Israel on his own head,
then his people might have risen
up and hailed him as the promised
Messiah, but instead thereof he
himself did not expect to be, and
subsequently, rejected and finally ar-
rested and found guilty of trying
to deceive the people. We look
upon the so-called plan of Chris-
tian salvation as instituted by
Christ and his apostles as a series
of shameful deceptions and fallacies
ever imposed upon mankind. The
word Christian is a farce, and
should have died with its founder.

The words, "Believe or be dam-
ned," are a foundation were never
founded. They are entirely too
vulgar for intelligent people to re-
tain for a moment. There is nei-
ther sense nor reason in any one
at the present day, calling themselves
a Christian. The word of God
is plain in this age, and is fast
passing away. There is no Christ
anyone to follow. He promised
his deluded followers that he
would come again in the near fu-
ture. But like all other of his
statements, we have to take them
for what they are worth and let
them pass. For our part we have
no earthly use for either any
Christ or Christianity, for over
fifty years of careful study in
sect, dogma, and doctrine, we find
one to be a myth, and the other a
superstition. We tried hard for a
while to make ourselves believe
something that our sense of truth
and reason told us was not true.
So we gave up the idea of the
star of liberty for our guide,
and for over fifty years have lived
outside the reach of either Christ
or his Christianity, and without
the poles of any so-called Chris-
tianity, we have been able to
and the longer we live the better
we like it.

JOEL M. BERRY.

ANTIQUE OF CHRISTIAN
DOCTRINES.

(By Joel M. Berry.)

The following we gather prin-
cipally from the writings of the
late C. B. Waite, in his History
of the Christian Religion Down
to the Second Century."

Judge Waite spent two years
in the Library of Congress, at
Washington, D. C., in the collec-
tion of material for his work.
He found that the Christian reli-
gion, as we know it, is a struc-
ture, and that the teaching that In-
gersoll says cannot be repeated too
often.

Many of the more prominent
doctrines of the Christian reli-
gion prevailed among the nations
of antiquity. Hundreds, and in
some instances, thousands of
years, before the time of Christ,
the doctrine of the Miraculous
Conception of the child Jesus, and
the history of the Hindoos, we
have an account of a man called
"Christina." He was the eighth
incarnation of the Hindoo God
"Vishnu," and according to
one writer was born 1156 years
before Christ. The parallel be-
tween the boyhood days of
Christina and that of Christ is
most remarkable. In substance,
they are the same exactly. We
will give a few instances. Both

are said to be God's incarnate
sons by a miraculous conception.
Christina was born in a dungeon;
Christ in a cave, and both dun-
geon and cave are said to have been
illuminated at time of birth. A
chorus of angels salute both in-
fants. Both claim to be of royal
descent, and both are said to
have commenced talking as soon
as born. Both are said to have
been cradled among shepherds.
The rulers of both countries in
which they were born become
alarmed; they fear the loss of
their kingdoms and seek the lives
of the infants—"Cansa" in the
case of Christina, and "Herod" in
the case of Christ. Both rulers
become wrathful and order a
slaughter of the infants. Both
Christina and Christ have com-
bats with huge serpents. They
both perform miracles in their in-
fancy or boyhood days, and both
are said to have raised the dead,
and are also said to have struck
dead persons who offended them;
both are preceded by men who
are sent to protect them from the
deceit of the rulers of the coun-
try. Christina lived at a place
called Mathura, and Christ on his
visit to Egypt stopped at a place
by that name. The first miracles
performed by both was that of
curing lepers. While in the age
of boyhood, both are chosen by
the lives of two men, who both
learn all the sciences in one
day and night. See "Hindu
Bhagavat Purana, and Gospel of
the Infancy of Christ."

Rather strange, it is not, to see
the lives of two men so near
parallel and live so far apart? It
also shows that Jesus was not
the first to be called a god and king,
by a thousand years at least.

Another great work of antiquity
comes up under the name of
Mormon. He was born at Sinope,
in the second century, and came
to Rome about A. D. 142. He
lays no claim to divinity, nor mi-
raculous birth, but is credited
with having supplied and pub-
lished the first New Testament
after ever appeared. It was writ-
ten in the Greek language and
was much shorter than our pre-
sent edition. Ever since the words
of the founder were pub-
lished, the words miracle, wonder,
and miracle workers have been
connected with them. Miracles
occur only where people are found
ready to believe in them; and the
miracles of the wisest and best
have occurred a long way
off, or a long while ago, or at
night, and when they are intend-
ed to convert the unbeliever they
only happen to the believer.

There is some very curious suf-
ficiently inspired to work mi-
racles in these days, if they are
Protestants, they find themselves in
lunatic asylums; and if they are
Catholics, the miracle generally
occurs in some seclusion retreat
away from all intelligent and
educated people, the favored one
being generally of the female sex,
who has been preparing for her
first communion, and has been
daily dosed with stories of the
miracles.

"Miracles for Fools!" was a
popular adage among the Greeks,
and the shrewd Romans said:
"The common people like to be
deceived." The Fathers of the
Church themselves were wonder-
workers in miracles. Origen at-
tributed them to magic, and says,
"The wonder workers rambled
about to play tricks at fairs and
markets, but never appeared in
the circles of the wise and better
educated people; always among
the ignorant and unlearned."

Justin Martyr says that Jesus
was accused of being a necromancer,
a magician and a deceiver of
the people. St. Augustine ad-
mits the same, and says that he
wrote books on magic, one of
which was called "Magia Jesu
Christi."

In regard to the miracles said
to have been performed by Jesus,
the only accounts of those are
those of the New Testament. His-
tory, while recording the mi-
racles and wonders performed by
other persons, is strangely silent
with regard to those of Jesus.

Justin, of Tiberius, who was
born about five years after the
time assigned for the crucifixion
of Jesus, wrote a Jewish history,
but it contained no mention of
Jesus, or of the events concerning
him, or of the miracles he is sup-
posed to have wrought.

According to the very books
which record the miracles of
Jesus, he nowhere claims to have
performed such deeds. When
told that if he wanted people to
believe in him he must first prove
his claim by a miracle, he said
"a wicked and adulterous gen-
eration asks for a sign, and no
sign shall be given it, except the
sign of the prophet Jonah." This

answer not satisfying the ques-
tioners, they came again and asked:
"If the kingdom of God is as
you say, close at hand, show
us at least some one of the signs
in the heavens which are to pre-
cede the coming of the Messiah."

It is evident that had he
reason why Israel did not believe
Jesus to be the Messiah, was that
the Jews required a sign.

"John," in the second century,
nukes Jesus reproach his fellow-
countrymen with, "Unless you
see signs and wonders, you do
not believe." The Baptist hear-
ing of his wonderful works, sent
to him and asked him if he were
the Messiah, and warned his
miraculous loving contemporaries
"not to be offended in him." (See
Matt. 11:6), which presupposes
that he was unable to perform
any magical feat outside the ordi-
nary. Why these apologies for
him if he could perform real mi-
racles? It is evident that had he
performed the miracles attributed
to him, the Jews would have been
only too ready to accept him as
their Messiah, and that since he
was not accepted by them, we
may justly conclude that he per-
formed no miracles.

"EXIT CHRIST."

Judging by recent development,
it seems that "Christ" is about to
join the "great majority." But
a few years ago there was a crime,
punishable by death, to disagree
even with "Christ," and only the
other day a university professor
of Chicago publicly declared, in
his lecture, "On the 'Historical
Insanity' to question Christ's ex-
istence. But it seems now that
neither by burnings nor by calling
names can "Christ" be saved.

Who would have thought that two
thousand years after the Christian
era, it would still be a question
whether such a man as Jesus
really lived? And it is no longer
Rationalists only who are asking
the question. Even the Protestant
clergy are beginning to realize
that their Christ is yielding to the
pressure of facts, and slowly slip-
ping away from them.

In an article written by a well
known contributor to the litera-
ture of the day, and published
broadly, it is plainly stated that
in our leading universities, "it
is contended that, to the scientific
mind, there is no historic certaint-
ty that Jesus ever lived." But
this is not all. From Germany
comes the cablegram that Profes-
sor Drews has challenged the clergy
to a debate on the historicity of
Jesus. It is all very wonderful.
Even two thousand years of belief
are not enough to make a false
truth, as will be seen by the fol-
lowing:

Reverend R. Roberts, of Brad-
ford, whose recent articles in The
Christian Commonwealth and The
Herald Journal, created great un-
easiness among the Christian clergy,
has again boldly questioned
the historicity of Jesus. He says:
"And I must put, in the first
place, a consideration which real-
ly dominates the whole issue, but
which I did not feel called upon
explicitly to state. I refer to the
great question of the historicity
of Jesus. I can not accept that
historicity as a demonstrated fact.
The evidence available for it is
so meagre, so contradictory, over-
sows so small a portion of the al-
leged life-story, and is, moreover,
so tainted with miracle that it does
not carry conviction to my mind."

And this from a reverend! Ra-
tionalists lead the way and the
clergy follow volens volens. But
let us not flatter ourselves that
the battle has been won. The
clergy are very resourceful. They
are not going to give up a creed
that brings them money and pow-
er, just because Christ is unhistor-
ical. "Christ may not have really
lived, but his gospel is neverthe-
less divine, argue the clergy.
What slippery folks these clergy
are!

If it is also true that the
gospels are contradictory and
unreliable, they answer, "We do
not base our faith upon the gos-
pels, but upon the Christ whom
they reveal." And when the his-
toricity of Christ is questioned,
they answer, "The gospels are
enough without Christ."

As long as a creed pays it will
not lack defenders.

M. M. Mangazarian.

—Truth Seeker.

And Likes the Smoke's Smell.

After having contributed \$140,
000 to foreign missions, St. Louis
is talking of thirty weeks of Billy
Sunday. That town seems to
have money to burn.

Blade Mail Bag

Terse and Pithy Comments from Various Readers on Sundry Subjects

Had Trouble.

Columbus, O., Feb. 23, Editor Blade: Enclosed find two clippings from the Ohio State Journal, which I wish you would forward to Dr. Wilson in Cincinnati, and ask him to give the subject of the division of the school fund some attention. The meeting of the preachers and priests was a "closed" affair. No reporters or other outsiders were allowed to be present. The papers here are afraid to give offense to the conspirators. I had trouble even in getting my letter in print.—J. F. SINTON.

Gathering Clippings.

St. Louis, Feb. 23, Dear Friend: Too busy to write, but I have gathered a few clippings that I think are worthy of notice in the Blade. I shall from time to time send in clippings that I think may be of interest, but I prefer that you use them without crediting me. I am openly an infidel, but am not anxious to see my name in print.—(Miss) L. WILEY, 211 S. Third St.

Why Can a Liberal Oppose Socialism?

Sycamore, Kan., Jan. 28, Editor Blade: By your permission, I would like to ask through the columns of the Blade, how any well-informed Liberal can logically oppose Socialism? I have given the subject a great deal of thought, and I cannot understand how any well posted man or woman can oppose our demands.—J. F. MAYO.

Still Enjoying the Blade.

Hagerstown, Md., Friend Jas. E. Hughes: I am still receiving, reading and enjoying the Blade, never having cancelled any pre-paid subscription; though, believing in the old adage that "competition is the life of trade," I also subscribed for its local competitor, thinking that in this "wide, wide world there is room enough for both, and being perfectly willing to "equally hear both sides" and if possible have two live Free Thought papers instead of one, in the same town, provided they vigorously fight the common enemy instead of each other.

For years I have constantly striven to increase the quantity and quality of daily, weekly and monthly circulating Rationalistic periodicals or literature, and therefore have for years advocated organizing Liberals into a "Liberal Press Writers' Association," to circulate marked newspaper articles and clippings among each other, and write editors thereof Rationalistic comments thereon, which if printed, will gradually liberate the readers, who would not now take a regular Free Thought paper, and would otherwise never read any Rationalistic arguments, but can thus be eventually educated into Rationalism and finally induced to subscribe for the Blade and other Free Thought papers.

Consequently, each Rationalistic paper ought to carry at least one column for such "Press Writers' use," and encourage them to do such writing.

Remembering you were "tried for the penitentiary" with old friend Moore, because of radical Blade publications, yet continued its publication, with all the risk it involved, makes us consider you a Rationalist still. And though Rationalists may misunderstand each other and differ among themselves on social, economic and financial affairs, yet so long as they are honest and faithfully strive to circulate and propagate Rationalistic ideas, Rationalists generally would weaken their own cause if they failed to support them.

Your reducing the Blade to the popular price for weekly newspapers—one dollar—ought to help you increase your subscription list, for where one can spare the former price, a dozen can now

spare the latter. In fact, if it could be published at a half or one fourth its present price, its circulation could be increased ten or twenty fold, and proportionately more good done, even if its size had to be halved or quartered to it as it could thus reach very many more people

who now are never reached at all. Ever truly yours for investigation, truth, Rationalism and progress.—D. WEBSTER GROH.

Think We Misplaced It.

Chaffee, Mo., Dear Bro. Hughes: I have been looking for my "Comments and Criticisms" on Bro. Severance's article in the Blade, but as yet have failed to see it. You published my accompanying letter, which is all right, and I hope to see the other soon. I trust your paper is in reality a "free thought" paper, and not one only in name, as some papers are that I have been writing for. I see articles from the pens of Bro. Severance, Joel M. Berry and others, who represent the Materialists and Atheists, and I hope to have the same courtesy extended to me, although I may differ radically from them. This is more than I had hoped to expect from the "religious press," but I expected more from a "free press" than from an orthodox or sectarian press. I send this accompanying article in reply to Brother Severance's article on the subject of "Christian Science," which I hope you will publish soon, as believe it of great importance to expose the real animus that actuates all bitter hatred and opposition to not only Christian Science, but all religions that are based on Christ, or bears the name of Christianity. Yours in love and good will.—A. S. WADE

The Time Is Ripe for the Harvest.

Madrid, Okla.—There are today thousands of men and women who are indifferent to anything but the pleasures of the flesh. They are sick, disgusted and tired of the Bible and Christian hypocrisy. If they could be induced to read Free Thought literature and understand the motives and intentions of Free Thinkers, I believe they would become valuable workers in the cause. With this army of workers united in one grand effort to push onward and forward the noble work of Paine and Ingersoll, America would shine forth in its splendor and the brilliancy of a higher civilization with the radiating countenances and smiling faces of intelligent men and women.

Priests and preachers, ignorance and superstition, as the working tools of a heathenish religion, would hide their slimy, filthy bodies in the shadows of the torch of reason, piercing the midnight gloom with the rays of intellectual freedom.

Unite! Unite! and push on the great work and the cause which is for the uplifting and betterment of humanity. Work for the children, so that they can enjoy the freedom that Paine and Ingersoll worked for. Never in the history of mankind has Free Thought been so tireless and fearless against the strongly organized bolos of ignorance and superstition as it is today. Onward, onward, march! Yours for freedom.—C. E. JOHNSON.

Bible Base Allegory.

Vera, So. Dakota, Editor Blade: Mr. J. M. Berry tells us: "The moment any one commences to read the Bible with their allegorical or visionary glasses on, that moment they destroy the literal meaning in toto."

Well, the literal meaning is of no value. Berry "takes the Bible as it reads. So do other orthodox people. The word allegory means "word-talk." Paul tells us to read the Bible as allegory,—that the literal sense is nonsense.

As allegory, all Bible characters continue "alive." "Uncle Sae," the Goddess of Liberty" and Paul's "holies" ply their avocations continually.

Imagination, the thing which "Eve," in Genesis, represents, continues to live and to be a helpmate to the human mind. The mind is carried Adown. Berry may attend to his sixth day woman. Maybe he can tell us what her name is; then we will tell him all about her. Berry claims there was no saviour mentioned in the old Testament. He forgets that Jehovah (same name and

person as we have in the Greek Jesus), was born to bring before the time of sin, or be benized afterward by sin.

Reason is personified as Jehovah and Jesus, by which we are enabled to direct our purposes or plans of conduct; when such plans, if enacted would be detrimental to our mental health, and we change or give them up before enactment, this is for(e)giving our sins; but if we crucify or destroy our reason, there is no more for(e)giving of pernicious thoughts. We involuntarily put them into practice to our hurt. Sin is evil thinking crime, is the violation of law. The one is a mental or divine operation (divine means to think), the other is a physical act. Brother Berry should remember that the ancient had no good language we have now and no means of writing their mental philosophies except by using objects as words; and when such "hieroglyphics," or picturing of human ideas were reduced to real writing, it was thought best to continue its secret nature so that "common men might not understand it." It is astonishing to orthodox preachers to learn that there is no authority in Genesis for the word God, Elohim, being an ancient name for the forces of nature. This is why the Hebrew religionists rejected the word God, recognizing Jehovah, which is Reason and Moses which is their personification of Conscience. If Brother Berry and other so-called free-thinkers would try to learn something, and stop copying from the writings of an age that knew no better, they could uproot orthodox in a year. There are hundreds of preachers who are disgusted with the orthodox method of bible study. They would gladly preach the truth if their congregations would permit them, but free-thinkers must pave the way of the truth: must hold out a welcoming hand to Christians, instead of abuse. We must teach them the facts that have been withheld from them. I remember how gladly I listened to the first "infidel" who talked in a reasonable and friendly way to me. I felt that he was more a friend, than the enemy, our preachers had made him out to be. Most "Liberals" and orthodox people delight to abuse those who differ in opinion from them, which is very wrong; opinions hurt no one.

All philosophy, all science, all biblical writings deal only with opinions or ideas: Santa Claus is but a concept. As a concept, nothing is harmful. Omnia bona bonis. It is only when an idea is embodied in human life or conduct that it becomes useful, or harmful.

Respectfully,

F. S. WEAVER.
Vera, S. Dak., March 8, 1910.

THE MARK OF THE "BEAST."

(S). "Graft."—"Great Is Diana of the Ephesians."

Paul has been preaching the "new religion" at Ephesus for about two years, and a "certain

man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made shrines for Diana, brought no small gains to the craftsmen." He called together his workmen and said: "Ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. When they heard this they were full of wrath." The result was, "there was a great uproar" (riot) at Ephesus and the authorities had to bring them into court to quell the riot. I saw in a St. Louis daily not long ago, an article condemning Christian Science as a dangerous heresy. It was copied from a certain Medical Journal, which said that at first little attention was paid to Christian Science by their thought, that it would soon die out of itself; but they were becoming so numerous, that it was alarming. (It was seriously interfering with their business). About one year ago, the leading men in a Ministerial Association in Indianapolis, became very much alarmed at the situation: the Christian Scientists were drawing the membership from their churches, and, as one preacher said, "they would lose their jobs," (so the Indianapolis paper stated). Why did they denounce Christian Science as a heresy? Not for the same reason that the M. D.'s denounced it, but "it was heresy" because it denies a personal Devil and a place of endless misery or a literal Hell. They secured their members, not by scaring them "into the fold" but by curing them of their diseases, and, as one has very forcibly expressed it, "by robbing the graveyard of its victims." My attention was directed to this subject, by reading an article in the Blue Grass Blade entitled, "Christian Science, It's Follies and Fallacies," by Channing Severance. He denounces it, not because it is healing the sick, nor yet because it does not uphold the dogma of endless hell, or a personal Devil; but because "it is only another branch on the tree of superstition," and as such is opposed to Materialism and Atheism. As I understand, there are two extreme opposing sects, that call themselves "Scientists," the Idealists (Christian Scientists) on the one hand, and the Materialists on the other. The Christian Scientist denies the existence of matter (all is Mind) and the Materialist denies the existence of Mind, "spirit" (all is matter). I am not a Christian Scientist any more than I am a Materialist. I believe in the existence of both Mind and Matter. I know too, that there is a vital, life-giving principle, that underlies all Christian Science, "divine healing." Power of Suggestion or Mind healing doctrines, and I am availing myself of all that I know. I am 87 years old and have never had a "spell of sickness" for 30 or 40 years that I can remember, although there is "a great deal of sickness all around me." If I have a slight touch of toothache or other pain, I can very soon overcome it. This is not "superstition," but as Scientific as the wireless telegraph, telephony or mesmerism.

Written for The Blade, by A. E. Wade.

1909—1909

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PHILOSOPHICAL FATALISM.

(Continued from Page 1).

But what a difference in character, philosophical standpoint, never deserves credit or blame, for they are and conduct! Yet from a philosopher lived true to their nature, same as a fish swims in the sea or a bird flies in the air. And when we view the act of any person in the fatalistic light, no man deserves credit for a good deed or censure for a bad one, for everybody is good or bad from necessity and not from will or choice.

Again, I repeat: the strongest impulse ALWAYS moves to action; and it is asserted by one who has thoroughly investigated the matter that murderers uniformly testify that they committed the deed of blood under an impulse so strong as to preclude all thoughts of punishment; and for every evil deed ever committed the same is true.

Now as every impulse and desire is natural to the body and the brain, which universal forces have built up and given consciousness, how can man be a creature of circumstances and a free moral agent? It is absurd to suppose it. Said P. B. Randolph, "No judge or jury that ever tried a victim for his liberty or his life was or is competent to tell how far any man is responsible for a given deed," and men who think in the right direction will agree with him. Dr. Randolph further said: "This is a world of chemical interchanges, and at one time we may be pure as angels, and within an hour inhale the spores of monads, which, from inertness, may spring into life and produce a disease or abnormal appetite," either of which, as we can readily see, would have an influence on the mind—the seat of human action. Said Prof. Fowler: "To inflame the organ of tone will create a singing disposition; the organ of veneration, a praying desire; of caution, groundless fears, and so on." And I recall to mind an old railroad companion who was struck on the head by his head and low bridge, inflaming thereby the organ of amativeness, and causing him to become not only soft, but looney toward the female sex, and a laughing-stock to his associates. All of this, and the man is forever and at all times susceptible to influences beyond his control that affect his conduct and actions. The food he eats has power to affect his morals and conscience, and so potent are the forces of poor digestion have led to murderous propensities. Vice and intemperance, coupled with poverty and hardship, have made devils out of men by nature good and kind, and so potent are the forces in shaping and controlling human beings, we are astonished daily by acts brought to our notice.

Few men would become cannibals in a land of plenty, but cases are common where men have eaten human flesh on the high seas when death stared them in the face from starvation. Conditions are everything, and man is the slave of them all through life, because he is what they make him—whether good or bad, moral or immoral. We have in the United States more than half a million women leading lives of prostitution. Are they doing this from choice or necessity? There can be but one reply, for the vast mass of exceptions, no woman deliberately chooses such a life unless driven to it. Fate compels them to so live, and fate insures new victims daily in all large cities, where existence is never an uncertainty for thousands who sell their services in some department of labor. Our State penitentiaries contain over 100,000 human beings, known as convicts, and there they are working out their lives in degradation, despair and disappointment. Ask any of these victims of fatalism if they ever sought or desired such an existence as they are now compelled to endure. Not one of them will tell you they ever expected such a fate when starting out in life; for hope, that pleasant and plausible liar, predicts only the good and desirable things, and gives them in abundance to everybody. So when we see what happens in this world, where all who live wish and hope for the best that life can give, we are compelled to agree with Carlyle, that "It is not in man that walketh to direct his footsteps."

Our New Thought friends tell us that desire, concentration and earnest efforts will win success, and that mortal man can and does shape his own destiny. But the assertion is not true, for to desire to win is an involuntary

thing; it comes to a man with power to compel him to act; and to secure contentment and peace of mind he strives to gratify this involuntary intruder. We had here in this city a man who began life as a brick-layer, but the desire took possession of him to be a preacher, and a preacher he became. Desire drove him into the pulpit; and he would have been driven in some other direction just the same had a different desire taken possession of him; so you see how fate plays with a man's vocation, and compels him to be whatever he is. Now if one of our New Thought friends was correct in his assertion, all men would be happy, contented, and successful, for all men desire to be and work with that end in view, but fate comes along and drives them into all kinds of trouble and disappointment.

To some men, everything seems to come without effort, and wealth rolls in upon them, while others are held like a vise in the grip of poverty, and never leave enough at the close of life to meet their funeral expenses. Did John D. Rockefeller when coal oil was struck about the time of our Civil War, that he would some day be the richest man in the world? No; and yet the forces of fate have made him such, and other men, once possessed of millions, have lost all, and been reduced to a condition of poverty.

We have had four great men in the history of this nation who have been President of the United States, and they concentrated their minds and their efforts to attain the coveted position, and failed. I refer to Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, James G. Blaine and William Jennings Bryan. According to new thought ideas they should have succeeded, but they didn't. Such intellectual nonentities as Franklin Pierce and Rutherford B. Hayes got there without effort or expectation, and fate forced them to the front and over the heads of men better fitted by brains and ability to hold the office. So goes the world, and many men of later years, and great ability and life in obscurity because fate furnishes no events to draw them out and develop them. Take the case of General Grant; but for the Civil War he would have been a successful business man, and had no more to do with shaping his career or destiny than had Bismarck of Germany, who was indirectly the cause of three great wars in which 80,000,000 men perished. Another example of fate was that gigantic figure in history, Napoleon Bonaparte. For a time he bid fair to dominate as a military ruler all of Europe, and when in the height of his success he was overthrown by the forces of fate, as the figure in history, Napoleon Bonaparte. For a time he bid fair to dominate as a military ruler all of Europe, and when in the height of his success he was overthrown by the forces of fate, as the figure in history, Napoleon Bonaparte. For a time he bid fair to dominate as a military ruler all of Europe, and when in the height of his success he was overthrown by the forces of fate, as the figure in history, Napoleon Bonaparte.

And the same thing occurs over and over again. But what are you going to do about it? You are going to do nothing for you cannot, for what fate has decreed is inevitable. All governments legislate more for property rights than human rights and ours is no exception, and therein is the fatal mistake, and causes their downfall. Legislation is bought and sold without a moral sense of wrong doing, and so it always will be while money is placed above mankind, and the greed of gain remains a national form of insanity. Wealth has always managed to control the masses until extremes produced a crisis and the man who cherishes the hope it will ever be otherwise, is fending a delusion. Ever since the enthronement of great corporations which followed our Civil War, clear and far-seeing men have fought with pen and tongue against growing evils, but not the slightest check has been placed on any of them, nor will there be, for capital controls legislation and to a great extent the public press, which in turn misleads and hoodles the people. Capital wants laws that will increase its power and profits, and trusted agents go where the laws are made and buy what they want and by so doing capital always has an advantage over labor and can control it. Hence, you can no more prevent the concentration of wealth, than you can check the rotary movement of this old earth, and as that is the cause which insures the downfall of nations, history is bound to repeat itself as long as mortal man exists and plays his automatic part in the tragedy of

the Roman empire to get where we are today, and we are under the same curse of venality and avarice that afflicted those people in the long ago; and in the windy-mad condition in which we exist, and under which we are drifting to those conditions which Macaulay foresaw and foretold. We are generating our own Huns and Vandals, as he declared would be the case. We are absolutely rotten politically, religiously and morally, and the only thing in life that society considers a success is money-getting.

The extremes in society are being widened daily. As Parton expressed it, wealth accumulates in heaps; and then follows the usual result. When Rome went down the great multitude of her people were landless and moneyless, so when Alaric the barbarian asked the plebeians why they did not defend the city, he got this reply: "We have nothing to defend." Thus are governments destroyed by concentrated wealth, for when the masses have nothing, they permit stronger physical forces to overthrow them, or do the work themselves. As Byron affirmed, history has but one page; first freedom and then glory; when that fails, wealth, avarice, corruption—barbarism. Over and over again this page has been written, and as our old friend Solomon expressed it, that which hath been is that which shall be. Whether you accept the fact or doubt it, makes no difference, future events in a general way are decreed with absolute certainty, under the law of periodicity.

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life. These may not be considered cheerful thoughts or optimistic ones, but if you want the kind that accord with facts and realities, you cannot reject them. The words of Pope are as true today as they were in the 18th century: "Man never is, but always to be blest," and hope still sings her hand and in the other a sword, and on his lips the curse of a savage God. Can any man who knows the truth, go to church and listen to a lie and feel edified? There is still another side that is against Christianity, and that is the scientific. Darwin understood the origin of man better than the writer of Genesis. Humboldt was better acquainted with Geology than Moses, and Laplace with his telescope could see further into space than Joshua. Every church is a monument and around it twines the serpent of superstition on whose fangs is written the history of ignorance, superstition and fear; and these three constitute the trinity of the Christian religion. In the place of worship I would substitute the adoration of nature. Let us understand the natural laws and solve the problems which are of far greater use to us than all the Christs you can cram into infinite space. It is knowledge of the world we live in, of ourselves and the things about us which we need. I would like to see the pulpit changed to a rostrum, adorned by learned teachers, and every pew filled by anxious students, and every church steeped made into an observatory. In place of the bell, a telescope in place of the Bible, a book of science; in place of the Gospel hymn the melodies of cheerfulness; in place of the contribution box, a gift to every child, and instead of hearing daily and yearly propounded the dry presumptions of ancient superstition, mankind would reach the intellectual plane where nature is our God, science the revealer, and knowledge the only Saviour.

Why I Don't Go To Church.

We infidels are found a great deal of fault with by our Christian opponents because we don't go to church. I do not go to church because there is nothing in the religious service of the church that is attractive. The truth is this. It is in the air that Christianity is false; that the dogmas of the Christian Church have no foundation in nature or man; that the story of Jesus in the New Testament is too absurd and foolish for honest intelligence to read with approval; and that science has overthrown the fables of the Old Testament. That there is nothing to show that man has ever fallen, or that he needs a Saviour; that miracles are lies; and that to pray is silly; that God and man, love God and money a great deal better, and that a general hypocrisy pervades society which is fostered by the preaching of Christianity. I have read the history of the Bible and I know that this book is not what it is called by the Christian ministers. To say that the Bible is the word of God is too ridiculous to believe. A prayer to God has never been answered by Him, and for me to go to church is equivalent to upholding and supporting an imposture. The church is not the place to receive intelligence. It's a dead place

where we hear only the rattling of dry bones. The preaching is not practical and we no wonder we stay away from church. The masses have been kept in ignorance and the infamous lie of hell has been the weapon which every priest and minister has held in his hand and in the other a sword, and on his lips the curse of a savage God. Can any man who knows the truth, go to church and listen to a lie and feel edified? There is still another side that is against Christianity, and that is the scientific. Darwin understood the origin of man better than the writer of Genesis.

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E. B. TANNER. THIS WORLD GOOD ENOUGH FOR HIM.

Rev. Dr. W. C. Biting, a St. Louis pastor, addressing an audience of university students at Ann Arbor, Michigan, on February 22, is reported to have said:

"The world is good enough for me. I do not want to go to a harp or wear a heavy crown of heaven. I had rather be here to day than be in heaven. It is not heaven to me, either to thump on gold and attend eternal prayer meetings. Most of those meetings we have today are had enough."

But the cleric did not rest at that point. He continued as follows:

"Oh, how abominable are some of the hymns. Ragtime tunes and white-washed cowboy songs are all they amount to."

Life bounded by an orthodox heaven and hell, with eternal psalm singing on the one hand, and endless burnings on the other, no wonder he had rather stay in this country, even with the thermometer down to zero, where we found it a few mornings ago.

If the disgruntled Christian would familiarize himself with a spiritual heaven, such as was de-

scribed by our Brother Van Waters, in these columns two weeks ago, he would find a Paradise worth enjoying. That person who would not desire to spend an eternity with the Bible heroes and assassins, and Moses, Joshua, David, and Solomon the latter with his 700 wives and 300 concubines, as constant companions, should be commended for good sense.—Progressive Thinker, Chicago.

Up To Them.

After collection in a certain colored church in Georgia it was the custom of the minister to deposit the offerings in a box which he turned over to the sexton. The two would then hide the box, together with its key, in a place known only to themselves.

Despite these precautions, it was found that small sums of money were being regularly extracted. So one day there was a conference between the two.

"Joseph," said the minister, sternly, "some one is taking the money from the box, and you know that no one has access to it but you and myself."

The sexton was unmoved. "Well minister," said he, "It's like this: If there's a deficiency, it's between you and me to make it up and say nothing about it."

—Harper's.

Experience Not Necessary.

"I believe I'll open a dramatic school," said the seedy-looking man.

"Why? You have never been on the stage, have you?" asked the preacher.

"No." "Then how do you expect to be able to teach people to act?" "It's simple enough. You're teaching people how to be angels, aren't you? Have you ever been in heaven?"—Chicago Record.

SHOOTS BIBLE TALES.

(Continued from Page 1).

"It wasn't up to the modernist, to Spinoza and the rest, to prove that Moses did not write the Pentateuch," Doctor Sale observed humorously. "An old Jewish rabbi, Ebn Ezra of the Twelfth Century denied the fact, but was too afraid of the watchdogs of Zion to come out in the open with his discovery."

In conclusion, Doctor Sale remarked that already the barriers of artificiality and conventions are crumbling away toward the realization of the "universal religion."

DOG FENNEL IN THE ORIENT

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